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**“ICH ERWARTE MIT UNGEDULD DAS ABSOLUTE ENDE
MEINER ELENDE EXISTENZ”
THE ‘IMAGE’ OF JAN BAUDOIN DE COURTENAY
IN HIS CORRESPONDENCE WITH HUGO SCHUCHARDT**

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0. *Introduction*

In the *Schuchardt-Nachlaß* at the University Library of Graz some thirty handwritten letters from Jan Baudouin de Courtenay (1846–1929) to Hugo Schuchardt (1842–1927) are conserved. The first of these dates from June 4, 1884, and the last of the series was written in Warsaw on November 14, 1922. The letters thus span a period of almost 40 years, with a strong representation for the years 1884–1887 (18 letters), and to a lesser extent 1895–1899 (6 letters); they can be assigned to various periods in Jan Baudouin de Courtenay’s professional career: his lecturership at the university of Dorpat (Tartu) between 1883 and 1893, his appointment to the University of Krakau (Cracow), which lasted from 1893 to 1900, his lecturership at the University of St. Petersburg from 1900 to 1918 (a stay which is also reflected in a letter from Lev Ščerba, Baudouin’s student, to Schuchardt¹), and, finally, his professorship at Warsaw University, which started in 1918 and lasted till Baudouin’s death in 1929. All the letters are written in German, a language which Baudouin seems to have mastered fairly well, although one notes a few infelicities of expression².

We will focus on a number of scientifically relevant aspects as well as on the “personal” dimension of the correspondence; we will attempt to combine a more systematic analysis of the correspondence with the chronological sequence of the letters.

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1. See the edition in Swiggers & Seldeslachts (1995).

2. Cf. Baudouin de Courtenay (1983:356): “Ich habe früher nie deutsch vorgetragen. Die deutsche Sprache habe ich verhältnismäßig spät erlernt und mich dabei um eine genaue Aussprache nicht viel gekümmert. Selbstverständlich also muß mein Vortrag auf Sie einen ganz sonderbaren und fremdartigen Eindruck machen” (from the introduction to a lecture of 1884).

1. *'Mixed' languages*

The correspondence starts in 1884, with a letter sent off from Dorpat, where Baudouin had been appointed the year before. The first letter constitutes a reply to a request of Schuchardt, who seems to have asked Baudouin for linguistic and bibliographical information on the Chinese-Russian jargon of Kyachta (south of Lake Baikal), which had been described by Čerepanov, Rejchman and Pjaseckij.³ Schuchardt, who had just rounded off in 1882-1883 his first series of studies on Creole languages, was by that time strongly interested in mixed, or transitional, languages; in 1884 he published his foundation-laying *Slawo-deutsches und Slawo-italienisches*, and it may be that he had already collected notes on the Kyachta jargon, on which he was to publish, in 1885, a short article.

From Baudouin's extensive answer, we learn that in his "second lecture program"⁴ (Kazan, 1877-1878) he had already compiled the secondary literature on this jargon, on which he planned to hold a lecture. Baudouin probably had the prospect of gathering materials on the jargon once he was established in Kazan: in any event, it is clear that in 1884 he still had to rely on secondary information⁵, and that the materials at his disposal were lacunary⁶. A basic factor of uncertainty for Baudouin was the inaccuracy of the transcriptions, especially those of Pjaseckij.

From the first letter on, we are also confronted with another theme which recurs in various letters: viz. the issue of transitional languages or dialects. Schuchardt was interested in knowing whether there were transitional dialects between Czech and Polish, between 'Großrussisch' and 'Kleinrussisch' (Ukrainian), and also inquired about the differentiation of Russian. Baudouin's answers to Schuchardt's queries are rather short, but extremely clear:

(1) He does not recognize transitional dialects in Slavic:

Aus den, wie ich weiss, ganz zuverlässigen Angaben ersieht man, dass zwischen dem čechischen u. polnischen, zwischen den gross- und kleinrussischen etc. keine

3. This contact-language was in existence between the 18th century and the first World War.

4. Published in 1884, in Warsaw (Baudouin de Courtenay 1884a).

5. In his letter of June 4, 1889, Baudouin writes: "Anbei erlaube ich mir einige Phrasen in dem Kjachtschen Jargon aus Čerepanow und aus Pjaseckij (den ich glücklicherweise hier bekam) zu übersenden. Die Russen aber haben es nicht so weit gebracht. Sie bemühen sich gar nicht, bevor sie nach Kjachta selbst kommen, wo sie den Jargon praktisch erlernen. Um etwas tüchtiges über den Kjachtschen Jargon zu veröffentlichen, dazu habe ich, wie Sie sehen, kein ausreichendes Material".

6. "Die Materialien sind sparsam und höchst ungenau. So z.B. beschreibt Čerepanow manche Eigenthümlichkeiten des Jargons; erwähnt aber gar nicht, das [sic] dieser Jargon *im Munde der Chinesen* — (— die Russen pflegen auch im Jargon *r* auszusprechen) — kein *r*, sondern nur *l*, oder „etwas mittleres zwischen *r* und *l*“ kennt".

Uebergangsdialekte im eigentlichen Sinne des Wortes zu constatiren sind. Man findet zwar hie und da etwas, was für einen Uebergangsdialekt gehalten werden könnte; aber es ist Uebergang nur in dem Sinne, wie z.B. die englische Sprache einen Uebergang von dem romanischen zu dem germanischen Sprachgebiete (oder umgekehrt) bildet: es ist gar ganz einfach eine spätere Mischung und Entlehnung mit der Aufbewahrung der charakteristischen Merkmale einer Gruppe. Eine befriedigende Erklärung dieser Erscheinung kann ich nicht geben. Vielleicht sind die Kleinrussen von den Grossrussen, die Čechen von den Polen etc. eine Zeitlang durch die /5/ Völkerschaften anderes Stammes (oder irgendwie anders) geschieden gewesen, und diese Periode der gegenseitigen sprachlichen Isolirung reichte dazu aus, um den betreffenden Dialektengruppen ein ganz besonderes, scharf bestimmtes Gepräge zu verleihen.⁷ (letter of June 4, 1884.)

(2) In spite of the few reliable materials then available, Baudouin posits a difference between 'Großrussisch' and 'Kleinrussisch', the former being divided into eastern and northern groups (all present in Siberia also).

Schuchardt also expressed interest in the Tatarian-Russian language spoken in Kazan, where Baudouin had taught between 1876 and 1883. On this issue — as in part also for the information on the Kyachta jargon — Baudouin asked his student Aleksandrov to provide Schuchardt with more detailed information. Although Aleksandrov could not offer a very precise description of the mixed Tatarian-Russian dialects⁸, there is a separate document joined to Baudouin's letter of February 22, 1885, which gives an idea of some interferences between Tatarian and Russian.

2. *Schuchardt and Baudouin on "Lautgesetze"*

A second recurrent theme in the correspondence is that of phonetic laws. In the mid 1880's Schuchardt was involved in a methodological debate with the Neogrammarians, the culminating point of which was his pamphlet *Über die Lautgesetze. Gegen die Junggrammatiker* (Berlin, 1885), in which Schuchardt attacked the wrongly construed opposition between phonetic (physiological) laws and analogy, and in which he questioned the homogeneity conditions presupposed by the Neogrammarians (cf. Swiggers 1982). In December 1885 Baudouin received the pamphlet, and he immediately replied to it:

7. Similar views about the absence of transitional dialects were already expressed by Baudouin (1875a:124 [1989:422]) on the basis of what he had found in his work on South Slavic (Slovenian) dialects.

8. In the separate document Aleksandrov mentions three dialects: the dialect of the Tatarian inhabitants of Kazan, the dialect of Tatarian workers living in the suburbs, and the dialect of the Tatarian peasants. — Schuchardt (1885 [1971: 293-294]) reviewed Aleksandrov (1884).

Vor einigen Tagen erhielt ich Ihre höchst interessante und wichtige Broschüre „Ueber die Lautgesetze“. Empfangen Sie meinen herzlichsten Dank für diese Sendung. Es machte mir sehr grosse Freude Ihre Arbeit mit Aufmerksamkeit durchzulesen. Ich habe sie den Herrn Dr. Masing⁹ und A. Aleksandrow laut vorgelesen, was uns zu verschiedenen Bemerkungen und Meinungsaustausch Anlass gab¹⁰. Ich will aber diese wichtige Abhandlung noch einmal für mich selbst durchlesen. [...] In einer baldigen Zukunft gedenke ich auch in der Sache der „Lautgesetze“ das Wort zu ergreifen, wobei ich eben auf Ihre neulichst erschienene Schrift vorwiegend Rücksicht nehmen werde.

Baudouin indeed devoted some of his later writings to the problem of phonetic laws: in 1895 he published his *Versuch einer Theorie phonetischer Alternationen*¹¹, and in 1910 he published his foundation-laying article “O „prawach głosowych””. But, in spite of a basic agreement between Baudouin and Schuchardt on the interpretation of sound law and analogy, it seems that Baudouin clearly departed from Schuchardt in distinguishing between the study of variant physical properties of sounds and the study of invariant phonemes. About his own conception in these matters, Baudouin remains silent in his letters to Schuchardt, except on two points:

(a) in a long letter about his transcription of the Slovenian dialect of the Resian valleys in Northern Italy, he discusses in detail his solutions of “phonetische Abstufungen” and, while admitting the degree of subjectivity inherent in his notations, he makes clear the importance he attaches to the accurate description of the physiology of the speech organs;

(b) in his letter of March 9, 1887 Baudouin discusses Kruszewski's theory of (morphophonemic) alternations, and clearly reaffirms his own tripartition into a

9. This must be Emil Masing, with whom Schuchardt corresponded on fishing-materials and on Slavo-Finnic contacts. (There are three letters by Masing conserved in the Schuchardt-Nachlaß.)

10. It was indeed common practice in the 19th century to read aloud, before the students, recent publications, and to discuss them. In another letter (letter of Feb. 12, 1904) Baudouin informs Schuchardt that he has read with his students an article by Meringer and that he will read to his students Schuchardt's article on an international auxiliary language (Schuchardt 1904): “Für die Zusendung Ihres Berichtes über die internationale Hilfssprache besten Dank. Ich will denselben meinen hiesigen Schülern (zwei bei mir den Rigveda und die allgemeine Sprachwissenschaft studirenden Spezialisten: einer ist Germanist, der andere Sprachforscher im allgemeinen) bei der nächsten Gelegenheit vorlesen”. One of these students was Ščerba, who proposed to Schuchardt to make a Russian translation of this text (see Swiggers & Seldeslachts 1995).

11. In his letter of March 31, 1895, Baudouin expresses his concern that Schuchardt should receive a copy of the book: “Falls das früher geschickte Exemplar verloren gehen [= verloren gegangen sein] sollte, werde ich Ihnen ein anderes nachschicken, denn es ist mir höchst erwünscht, daß Sie gerade das Schriftchen bekommen”.

physiological, sociological and psychological dimension (applying to language and to the evolutionary laws):

Mit Kruszewski's Auseinandersetzung bin ich auch gar nicht einverstanden. Seine Lautgesetze sind eigentlich *logische* Gesetze, wobei er außerdem einige Unkonsequenzen [*sic*] begeht. Wie ich jetzt aber die Sache auffasse, kann man weder von „gleichen“, noch „ungleichen“ Lauten, als Gegenständen der Untersuchung sprechen, da man doch die Laute auf ihre wirkliche (physiol.-psychologische) Grundlage zurückführen muß. Ich nehme also jetzt *keine* Lautgesetze an; dafür aber erkenne ich die Nothwendigkeit sich nach den physisch-physiologischen, psychologischen u. sociologischen Gesetzen auch in der Phonetik um[zu]sehen. In Ihrer Schrift „Ueber die Lautgesetze“ finde ich auch ungefähr denselben Standpunkt vertreten.

Although Baudouin never discusses the differences between his view of phonetics/phonology and Schuchardt's view, he wrote in his letter of January 10, 1911, that they agreed in distinguishing the acoustic aspect from the “physiological” (i.e. articulatory) one, and admitted also that on the issue of phonetic change, their views were not too different:

So gebe ich Ihnen recht, daß unsere (Ihre und meine) auffassung [*sic*] der „lautgesetze“ sich, im grunde genommen, gar nicht unterscheiden. Manche unvorsichtige und zu einseitige ausdrücke geben anlaß zu mißverständnissen.

3. *Slavic linguistics and philology*

Several letters inform us about Baudouin and Schuchardt's interest in issues of Slavic linguistics. Schuchardt, although he was not by training a Slavic scholar¹², was well at home in various Slavic languages, and entered, upon occasion, the field of Slavic linguistics. In his correspondence with Baudouin de Courtenay he regularly seems to have proposed a few ideas on Slavic etymologies, or to have asked his Polish correspondent for advice. In his letter of July 3, 1884 Baudouin informs Schuchardt about the origin of Russ. *šuryury* (and related *šaromyga*, *šaromyžka*). A very extensive discussion is to be found in a series of letters, where Baudouin takes a critical look at Schuchardt's etymology of Slavic *kračunъ* (Russ. *karačun*, *koročun*), on which Schuchardt published an article in Jagić's *Archiv* (1886b:526-527 [1971:295-296])¹³. Baudouin formulates a number of criticisms concerning Schuchardt's etymology. His main criticism is that the meaning “destruction, end, death” is

12. He regarded himself as some kind of autodidact in Slavic linguistics, as appears from his confession at the beginning of his private *Festschrift* for August Leskien (see Schuchardt 1894; cf. Seldeslachts & Swiggers 1995).

13. See also Schuchardt (1886a) and Dieter Gerhardt in Schuchardt (1971:10-11).

proper to Russian, and that one cannot accept the development of Old Slav. *krač-* to Russ. *koroč-*; he therefore prefers a link with the root **kork* (not **kort*), and does not accept Schuchardt's idea of *koročun* replacing the form *kračun* on the basis of phonetic analogy. On two occasions he criticizes Franz Miklosich: first, on the issue of the inaccurate designation of Old Church Slavic as "paleo-Slovenic", and then on the quality of his *Lexicon palaeoslovenicum*, which Baudouin criticizes for being based on a graphical criterion for inclusion, and not on a linguistic criterion.

A joint interest of Schuchardt and Baudouin was the study of the Resian dialects spoken in Northern Italy; already in the years 1872-1875 Baudouin had conducted field work on the Slovenian dialects of Rezija, and his subsequent publications on these dialects still constitute basic descriptions of this Slovenian variety¹⁴. From 1875 on Baudouin published extensively on Resian Slovenian (see especially 1875a, 1875b, 1876, 1884b, 1885)¹⁵. In his letter of March 1, 1886 Baudouin discusses issues of Resian phonetics, probably because Schuchardt had asked for more details concerning the notation of short vowels, and the syllables containing a glide. Schuchardt's questions were prompted, so it seems, by Baudouin's 1875 *Opyt fonetiki rez'janskich govorov*, and maybe also by Baudouin's articles on the dialect of Cirkno. In the same letter Baudouin makes clear his intent to pursue his study of Slovenian:

Die Möglichkeit jedes Jahr in die südslavischen Länder zu kommen, um meine dialektologischen Forschungen fortzusetzen, gehört zu meinen sehr zahlreichen heissen Wünschen. Leider gebracht es mir an den nöthigen Mitteln, vor allem aber an *nervus rerum agendarum*¹⁶. Wir sind hier ziemlich spärlich dotirt. Wenn man eine Familie und nur 2400 (eigentlich 2352) Rubel Gage hat, kann man sich häufige wissenschaftliche Ausflüge nicht erlauben (Uebrigens besuchte ich voriges Jahr Litauen). Trotz alledem hoffe ich in einer nicht entlegenen Zukunft wieder nach Slovenien zu kommen, um meine Dialektenstudien [*sic*] zu vervollständigen. [...] Eine slovenische Dialektologie liegt in meinen Plänen. Es ist möglich, dass ich sie einmal fertig mache.

In this letter Baudouin also announces that he is finishing the first part of his collection of dialect texts, to be published by the St. Petersburg Academy, and that he is contemplating the possibility of publishing part of his text collections with the Vienna Academy. One month later, in his letter of April 3, Baudouin writes about the progress of his project:

14. Cf. now Steenwijk (1992) and Steenwijk (ed. 1993).

15. Most of these publications on Slovenian are mentioned in a letter of December 31, 1885.

16. See also Baudouin's letter of July 15, 1886: "Ich schwärme immer darüber, noch einmal od. einige Male zu den Südslaven zu gehen, und dabei selbstverständlich auch Graz zu besuchen. Leider aber bin ich daran durch den *nervus rerum agendarum* verhindert. Die Gage in Dorpat ist dazu ungenügend.

Der erste Band (mit den resianischen Sprachproben) soll bald druckfertig sein, worauf ich ihn der SPetersburger Akademie übergebe. Gleichzeitig mit den Texten will ich auch ihre deutsche Uebersetzung drucken.

The edited *Sprachproben*, however, appeared only much later: the first volume¹⁷ was published in 1895, and the two following ones came out only in 1904 and 1913¹⁸.

4. *Hopes, illusions, combativity, and resignation*

With Baudouin's interest in Slovenian, and his intention to devote himself regularly to field work on the Resian dialects, we are on the borderline of the scientific and the more personal aspects of the correspondence. Baudouin's interest in Resian became tied up with the aspiration to obtain a professorship in Vienna, as the successor to Miklosich. This happened in 1886, as we can gather from Baudouin's letter of April 3, 1886. It seems that Schuchardt had discussed the matter with Miklosich, but Baudouin had been rather imprudent in informing a colleague in Dorpat of his prospects, upon which the rumour was spread by Russian, German-Austrian and Czech newspapers. In his letter of April 11, 1886, Baudouin ironizes on the spread of the gossip:

Es existirt, soviel ich weiss, ein Gesellschaftsspiel, welches darin besteht, dass irgend welche Person eine x-beliebige Phrase od. selbst ein Wort ihrem Nachbar ins Ohr spricht. Dieser sagt es seinerseits seinem Nachbar u.s.w., bis endlich das von der ersten Person Gesagte in einer fast immer ganz entstellten Form zu ihr zurückkehrt. So auch ungefähr in dem gegebenen Falle hat die vermeintliche Nachricht eine kleine Reise gemacht, um schliesslich zu mir zu gelangen.

Baudouin was never appointed in Vienna: it was V. Jagić who succeeded to Miklosich in 1886. As to an appointment in St. Petersburg, Baudouin had no illusions; as he writes in his letter of May 12, 1886:

Der Weg nach Petersburg ist für mich für immer gesperrt, schon deswegen, weil ich ein Pole bin. Ausserdem haben die Russen einige Slavisten, welche keineswegs niedriger und vielleicht selbst bedeutend höher als ich in wissenschaftlicher Hinsicht stehen, welche aber dazu noch den Vortheil haben, dass sie entweder Russen sind, oder sich als Russen bekennen und im Russischen Ultrapatriotismus und Chauvinismus machen, — ein Talent, welches mir vollkommen abgeht.

17. This volume must have been in the press for a long time (it was "vorgelegt in 1886"); in his letter of March 9, 1887 Baudouin mentions that he is correcting the proofs of his Resian texts.

18. *Materialien zur südslavischen Dialektologie und Ethnographie*: 1. *Resianische Texte gesammelt in den Jahren 1872, 1873 und 1877* (St. Petersburg, 1895); 2. *Sprachproben in den Mundarten der Slaven von Torre im Nordöstlichen Italien* (St. Petersburg, 1904); 3. *Resianisches Sprachdenkmal "Christianske uzihilo"* (St. Petersburg, 1913).

Baudouin, however, returned to St. Petersburg, in 1900, and remained there till the outbreak of the Russian Revolution. His departure from Cracow was tied up with the difficulties he had to face upon the publication of some political pamphlets. In 1899 he wrote to Schuchardt that he regarded Bismarck¹⁹ as "einen der Hauptvergifter der öffentlichen Moral". Both Baudouin's and his wife's political publications were seen as incentives to "pan-Slavic agitation", and Baudouin's position at the University had become precarious, not so much within the Faculty but from the point of view of the government:

Die ministerielle Verordnung über meine Entlassung (d.h. über die Nichterneuerung des fünfjährigen Kontraktes) kam erst nach einer Fakultätssitzung, wo man mit 16 Stimmen gegen 6 principiell beschloß, mich hier zu behalten, und man nur eine Kommission zur Aufklärung einiger Punkte und überhaupt für Verhandlungen mit mir wählte. Man wollte nämlich von mir wissen, ob ich durch die Einwilligung zur Uebersetzung meiner Broschüre ins Deutsche keine schlechten Absichten gegen die hiesige Gesellschaft den Ausdruck geben wollte. Es war eine Konzession für die Herren, die gegen mich aus „patriotischen“ (!!) Rücksichten raisonnirt hatten [...].²⁰

We do not have letters from the period when Baudouin moved to St. Petersburg, nor from the early 1900's. The first letter from St. Petersburg is dated February 12, 1904. In later letters Baudouin complains about his heavy teaching-duties (14 to 16 hours a week) in St. Petersburg, and about his "ziemlich schwach[e] belesenheit".

Baudouin's last letter sent from St. Petersburg is dated February 1, 1912; the next one in the collection dates from July 1920, and was sent from Warsaw, where Baudouin spent his last years. From this period there are only two letters, dated July 7, 1920 and November 14, 1922. In both letters Baudouin appears as

19. In his subsequent letter (of February 1, 1899) to Schuchardt (who had strong "great-German" feelings), Baudouin made his point very clear: "Sie irren ganz sicher, wenn Sie behaupten, daß ich nur als Pole Bismarck „hassen“ darf. Nicht im geringsten! In politics fühle ich mich weder Pole, noch Slave, noch Germane; ich fühle mich nur als Mensch, der nach Wahrheit und Gerechtigkeit strebt. Und gerade als solcher muß ich Bismarck's Einfluß gerade auf Deutschland für höchst schädlich erkennen. Ich wünsche einen solchen Mann keinem Volke und halte seine Existenz für ein schreckliches Unglück. Der jetzigen Verwilderung der europäischen Gesellschaft hat eben Bismarck in einem hohen Maße beigesteuert".

20. We learn from his letter of February 1, 1899 that Baudouin was almost certain to leave for Russia; the Faculty in Cracow had by then already appointed Rozwadowski as his successor. Baudouin confessed to Schuchardt: "Es ist wahr, daß nicht nur meine Frau, sondern auch ich selbst „mit warmen Gefühlen“ nach Krakau übersiedelten. Ein längeres Verweilen unter den hiesigen Verhältnissen aber wirkte als ein Guß kalten Wassers; wir sind nichts weniger als entzückt. Und so erfüllt uns die Aussicht, nach Rußland zurückkehren zu müssen, mit einem viel geringeren Schrecken, als es sonst zu erwarten wäre".

a resigned and embittered man, who had suffered serious blows in leaving Russia:

Ich meinerseits lebe in scheußlichsten Umständen. Ich bin zwar Professor an der hiesigen Universität aber meine wissenschaftliche Tätigkeit ist beinahe vollständig paralysiert. Ich konnte zwar im J. 1918 Petersburg verlassen, aber alle meine in einer langen Reihe von Jahren gesammelten und angehäuften Materialien sind, sammt [sic] einigen kostbaren Möbeln, dort geblieben. Ich habe keinen Grund zu erwarten, daß sie dort unverzehrt geblieben sind. Ganz umgekehrt, nach allem, was man erfährt, zu schließen, sind sie höchstwahrscheinlich vernichtet worden. Sie können sich vorstellen, wie ein solcher Gedanke auf meine Stimmung und Arbeitsfähigkeit wirkt. Ich erwarte mit Sehnsucht das Ende der persönlichen Welt. Da wird man schließlich Ruhe finden²¹.

If bitterness and moroseness set the tone of Baudouin's last letters to Schuchardt, one should stress the fact that Baudouin appears in a different light in the correspondence dating from before 1920. Although on occasion he characterizes himself as a *cunctator*, as a lazy correspondent, and as a *Verzögerungsmann*, it is clear that he was a talented scholar with a strong background in Indo-European and Slavic philology, well-trained in phonetics, and with wide-ranging interests, such as the theory of language change, the issue of language contacts and mixed languages, the investigation of child language. The letters also testify to Baudouin's variegated scholarly publications, some of which had to be prepared in difficult circumstances. Another area in which the letters offer information is that of Baudouin's contacts with his students and former students, or with his colleagues: among the scholars mentioned in the correspondence are M. Kruszewski, A. Aleksandrov, C. Salemann, J. Rozwadowski, P. Pjaseckij, V. Jagić, F. (von) Miklosich, W. Radloff, M. Weske, S. Pawlicki, N. Ja. Marr, and Baudouin's son-in-law Max Vasmer.

But by far the most exciting letters are those where Baudouin speaks from the bottom of his heart. The occasions for Baudouin's open-heartedness and enthusiasm are of two kinds: scientific and political. In matters scientific, we meet a linguist who devoted himself with great enthusiasm to the study of Slovenian dialects, and whose dream was to obtain a position in Vienna, so as to be able to conduct life-long research on these dialects:

21. And see also the last letter: "Durch die Erlebnisse der letzten Jahre, infolge des Verlustes aller meiner im Laufe meines ganzen Lebens gesammelten Materialien, die in Petersburg samt meinem sonstigen Eigentum (incl. Bibliothek) teils geraubt, teils vernichtet worden sind, ist meine wissenschaftliche Tätigkeit fast vollständig gelähmt. Ich erwarte mit Ungeduld das absolute Ende meiner elenden Existenz".

Ich kann es Ihnen nicht verhehlen, dass es mir höchst lieb wäre eben in Wien wirken zu können, und zwar vorwiegend wegen der kleinen Entfernung von den slovenischen Ländern. (letter of March 1, 1886)

As to Baudouin's political ideas, a few letters provide us with neat and unreserved statements and confessions. Baudouin was first of all a man who was averse to abusively exploited patriotic feelings²², and of any kind of discrimination. He deplored the nationalistic struggles he witnessed in the 1880's (see his letter of January 24, 1886: "Wir leben ja in den [*sic*] übelriechenden Zeiten, welche sehr stark an das Mittelalter erinnern, in welchem man zwar noch keine Scheiterhaufen hat, wo man aber massenhafte Verbannungen für die Erbsünde allein ganz gemüthlich treibt"). His personal career, and his views on what other linguists took as their position, led him to a fundamental distrust of any kind of political compromise, of cheap demagoguery, and of blind imperialism. On a few occasions Baudouin comments on the chauvinism or ultrapatriotism of some of his colleagues. From one of the letters (January 15, 1899) we learn that Schuchardt had explicitly requested communication of Baudouin's political pamphlets. In his answer, Baudouin profited from the occasion to vent his indignation about Bismarck's politics, and judging by the next letter it seems that this was not really to Schuchardt's liking. It is this sequel letter, dated February 1, 1899 which provides the most explicit picture of Baudouin as a political thinker, and as a man of great integrity and moral awareness. It is there that he expresses his respect for Tomáš Masaryk (one of the "sehr wenige gerechte und besonnene Politiker"), that he decries chauvinism²³, and expresses his contempt for the ultranationalistic tendencies in Polish circles. It is in this letter that Baudouin makes it clear to Schuchardt that as a political thinker, he is concerned with the fundamental issues of truth and justice, which can only exist when all privileges have been abolished.

Ich bin ja auch gegen alle mittelalterlichen und sonstigen historischen Rechte, die ich geradezu für einen Unsinn und für eine ungeheure Ungerechtigkeit halte. Ich kenne nur ein einziges wirkliches Recht: das Recht der Menschheit und der Menschen.

It was a great personal tragedy for Baudouin, a humanist of the purest kind, who deplored the "Verwilderung der europäischen Gesellschaft", to be treated as an outlaw, both in his native Poland and in (Great-)Russia, to be at the mercy

22. See, e.g., his letter of December 17, 1897: "Was sagen Sie zu der gegenwärtigen Entfesselung der wilden „patriotischen“ Pöbelinstinkte? Wir leben in den [*sic*] schönen Zeiten, nicht wahr?".

23. "Der Chauvinismus, der Nationalitäten- und Menschenhaß überhaupt (cf. den Antisemitismus) sind eine wahre moralische Epidemie unserer Zeiten".

of political instances and to be seriously underrated in his professional career. The tragedy reached its peak with the First World War, when Baudouin was imprisoned, and with the Russian Revolution, when he had to leave the country deprived of all his belongings and scientific materials²⁴. The resignation expressed in his two final letters to Schuchardt was much more than the expression of personal unhappiness; it was, above all, the sign of a true humanist's deepest disillusion, that of witnessing the *Untergang des Abendlandes*.

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24. On these events, see also Vasmer (1947:73); Adamska-Sałaciak (1996:65-66).

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